

## **Theft of Handbag and Mobile Phone from Teacher**

Three 14 year old boys took a handbag  
and mobile phone off a teacher's desk.  
The School set up a meeting with the boys  
and their parents.

Three 14 year old boys had been instructed to collect a set of school books from the staff common room at their school. When there was no answer at the door they let themselves in, collected the books, but also took a handbag and mobile phone off a teacher's desk. Immediately under suspicion when the items were missed, the boys were confronted by the Deputy Head and owned up. They were suspended for 3 days and the police were called in. The boys were asked to attend a meeting together with their mothers, their Year Head and the Deputy Head. A police Schools and Youth Liaison Officer, who visited the school regularly and worked closely with school staff to combat crime, anti social behaviour and bullying, chaired the meeting. He asked the boys to describe what had happened and how they felt about it. The Deputy Head then recounted how the crime victim, a young female teacher known for her calm, rational approach to life, had nevertheless been deeply affected by the incident, to the extent that she did not feel able to attend the meeting. Their Year Head was massively disappointed that the boys had made decisions which had a major impact on other people's lives, whilst their mothers were furious. 'We've been burgled twice,' one of them said, 'he knows what it's like to have his stuff taken and we don't like it.' Formal Police Reprimands were issued to the boys, and the meeting ended with them agreeing to write letters of apology to the Teacher. 'We all make mistakes,' said their Year Head, 'but there are now some bridges that need to be rebuilt around trust and honesty.'